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BROADCAST EXCERPT

CATHERINE CRIER: Environmental issues don't all center on the great outdoors. There's also a lot of concern about indoor pollution. In our Science Report Miles O'Brien takes a look at a new ventilation system for office buildings that promises to clean up indoor air without sending heating and cooling bills through the roof.

MILES O'BRIEN: Scientists call it the sick building syndrome. It occurs mostly in new buildings which are sealed tightly to conserve energy. The symptoms also include nausea, headaches and in some cases reproductive disorders. The experts say it is nothing that a little fresh air wouldn't help.

JOHN FISCHER (SEMCO MANUFACTURING): To have an acceptable indoor quality you need more outside air. To heat and cool outside air is a big expense. People are going to be looking for technology that will allow them to condition that outside air at the lowest possible expense. Therein lies our technology.'

O'BRIEN: John Fischer's technology is literally revolutionary. The spinning wheel retains 75 to 90% of the energy from heated or cooled indoor air which is being blown out as exhaust. It then transfers the energy to incoming fresh air and it filters out indoor pollution created by synthetic carpeting, partitions, furniture, laser printers and copying machines.

FISCHER: This allows you to have the same effect of opening up a window without letting in all of the heat in the summer and letting all the cold air in the wintertime.

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CHARLENE BAYER (GEORGIA TECH): I'm basically a very cynical person. I rarely believe a manufacturer. We have a laboratory scale system which Ii have challenged quite severely to try to force it to fail as far as transferring pollutants but so far we have not been able to make it fail.

O'BRIEN: In tests conducted at this office building in downtown Atlanta Georgia Tech engineers say the wheel reduced indoor pollution by as much as 40%. SEMCO, the company which makes the wheel says the device will save the building owner more than 50,000 dollars a year in heating and cooling costs and apparently the people who work here are pleased as well.

WAYNE HOLTON (BUILDING MANAGER): As far as the, I guess the quality of the air coming into the building I would say there is hardly any complaints at all.

O'BRIEN: There is growing awareness of indoor pollution among the people who build office buildings. Recently the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers recommended four times more fresh air be pumped into office buildings as was previously suggested. Many cities are making that suggestion as part of their building codes.

I'm Miles O'Brien for CNN in Atlanta.

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